

Remarks/Arguments

I. Status of the Claims:

Claims 1-9, 12-14, 18-21, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79-82, 85-91, 94-101 and 103-115 stand rejected. Claims 1, 71 and 115 are currently amended. Claims 18 and 73 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 77 is allowed. Claims 1-9, 12-14, 19-21, 71, 75, 77, 79-82, 85-91, 94-101 and 103-115 are pending in the case.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112:

Claim 115 stands rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph. While Applicant respectfully disagrees with the substance of these rejections, claim 115 is nevertheless amended herewith solely in the interest of advancing prosecution of the case and without acquiescing to the Examiner's arguments in support thereof. Applicant believes this amendment obviates this rejection, and respectfully requests its removal.

III. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 1-4, 71, 85-87, 91, 94-101, 105, 106 and 115 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable for reasons of record. Without agreeing with or acquiescing to the Examiner's reasoning in support of these rejections, and solely in the interest of advancing prosecution of the case, claims 1 and 71 are currently amended to incorporate the limitations set forth in dependent claims 18 and 73, respectively. Applicant notes that on page 16 of the instant office action, The Examiner indicates that claims 18 and 73 are objected to for being dependent on a rejected base claims, but would be allowable if written in independent form. Accordingly, Applicant believes that canceling the objected to claims and incorporating the limitations thereof into the base claims upon which they depend, all remaining rejections will be obviated. Accordingly, Applicant submits that all the pending claims are in condition for immediate allowance and respectfully requests that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowance stating same.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for immediate allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided. Any additional fees (including but not limited to appropriate petition fees) that may be required are hereby authorized to be charged to our **Deposit Account No. 50-3994**, from which the undersigned is authorized to draw funds.

Respectfully submitted,

/Jonathan P. Aumais/

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